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UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (+251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (+251-11) 5519 321
Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
350TH MEETING
14 JANUARY 2013
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/BR.2(CCCL)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 350th meeting held on 14 January 2013, was briefed by the Commissioner for Peace and Security on the evolution of the situation in Mali.

Council strongly condemned the attacks carried out by armed terrorist and criminal groups against the town of Konna, in the Mopti area, on 10 January 2013. Council expressed AU's full solidarity with Mali, and endorsed the statement issued by the Chairperson of the Commission on 11 January 2013.

Council called on all AU Member States, in line with its relevant decisions and United Nations Security Council resolutions, to extend the necessary logistical, financial, capacity building and intelligence support to the Malian Defense and Security Forces, to enable them to speedily and fully restore State authority over the northern part of the country. In this respect, Council commended the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for its dynamism in dealing with the situation in Mali, as well as the current Chairman of ECOWAS and the President of the ECOWAS Commission for their sustained efforts and commitment. Council further commended the ECOWAS Member States that have swiftly deployed troops in Mali as part of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), and urged all those that have committed to contribute troops to the Mission to do so timeously.

Council also welcomed the steps taken by Mali's neighbors to strengthen, to the extent possible, the monitoring of their borders to prevent any possible support to the armed terrorist and criminal groups, in line with its relevant communiqués. Council underlined the importance of close coordination with the core countries to facilitate the ongoing efforts.

Council recalled that it had repeatedly drawn attention to the seriousness of the situation in northern Mali and the need for sustained international support to the African-led efforts. In this respect, Council acknowledged the assistance provided by France, at the request of the Malian authorities and within the framework of UN Security Council resolution 2085 (2012). Council also expressed appreciation to all other AU partners extending support to Mali, in these difficult circumstances. Council encouraged them to pursue their efforts and support.

Council welcomed the steps taken by ECOWAS and the AU Commissions to expedite the implementation of the relevant provisions of resolution 2085 (2012), in particular the deployment of AFISMA and the convening of the envisaged donors' conference. Council took note of the consultative meeting that the two organizations intend to convene in Addis Ababa, on 16 January 2013. In this regard, Council looks forward to the outcome of the consultative meeting.

Council called on all AU Member States and international partners to provide the support required for the effective deployment of AFISMA and the running of its operations. Council reiterated the call by both the AU and ECOWAS to the UN Security Council, for the establishment of a support package for AFISMA funded through UN assessed contributions.

Council reiterated AU's support to the Malian transitional authorities, particularly President Dioncounda Traoré and Prime Minister Diango Cissoko, and called on all Malian stakeholders to rally behind them at this very difficult juncture and to place the fundamental interests of Mali above narrow political considerations.

Council noted with appreciation the steps taken by the Commission in close coordination with ECOWAS and the UN, and looks forward to the early convening of the next meeting of the Support and Follow-up Group on the Situation in Mali to further mobilize the international community in support of Mali and the African-led efforts. Council encouraged the Commission to finalize the preparations for the holding, on the margins of the forthcoming AU Summit, of the donors' conference, as requested by Council in the communiqué adopted at its 341st meeting held on 13 November 2012, and subsequently supported by the UN Security Council in resolution 2085(2012).

Council welcomed the visits that the AU High Representative for Mali and the Sahel, former President Pierre Buyoya, has recently undertaken to Mali and Niger, for consultations with the authorities of these countries, and requested the Commission to continue to monitor the situation closely and to report to it regularly.

Council encouraged the Commission to pursue the implementation of the Strategic Concept for the Resolution of the Crises in Mali, adopted by Council on 24 October 2012.

Council agreed to review the situation in Mali on the occasion of its meeting at the level of the Heads of State and Government, scheduled to take place on the margins of the forthcoming AU Summit, at the end of January 2013.

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